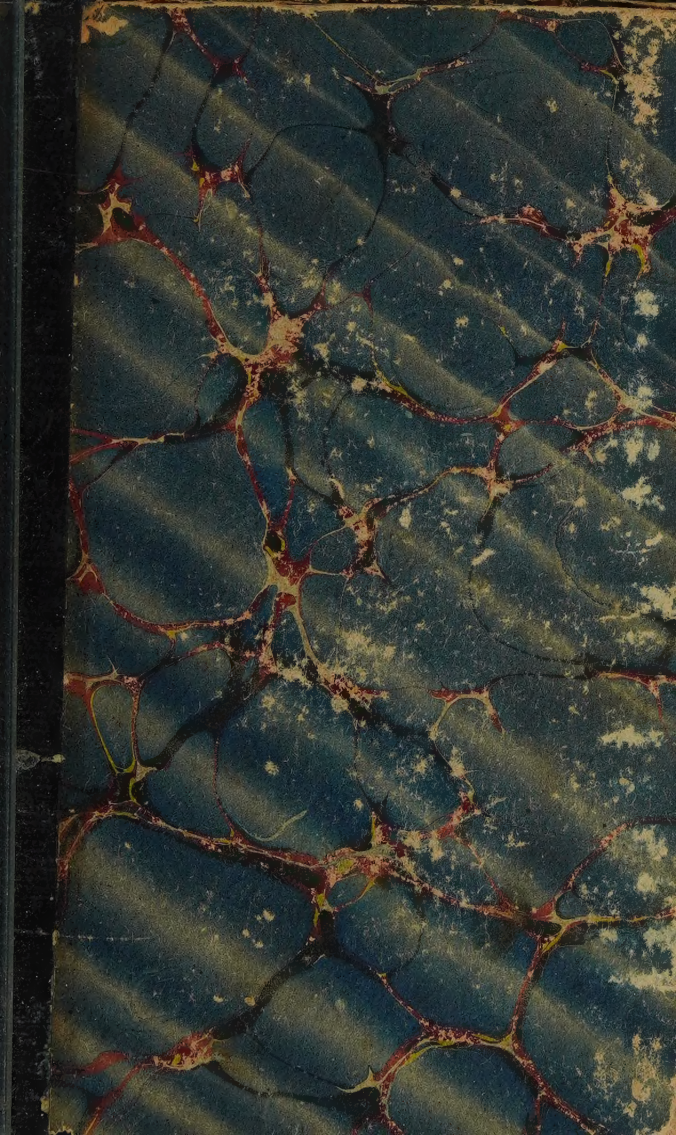




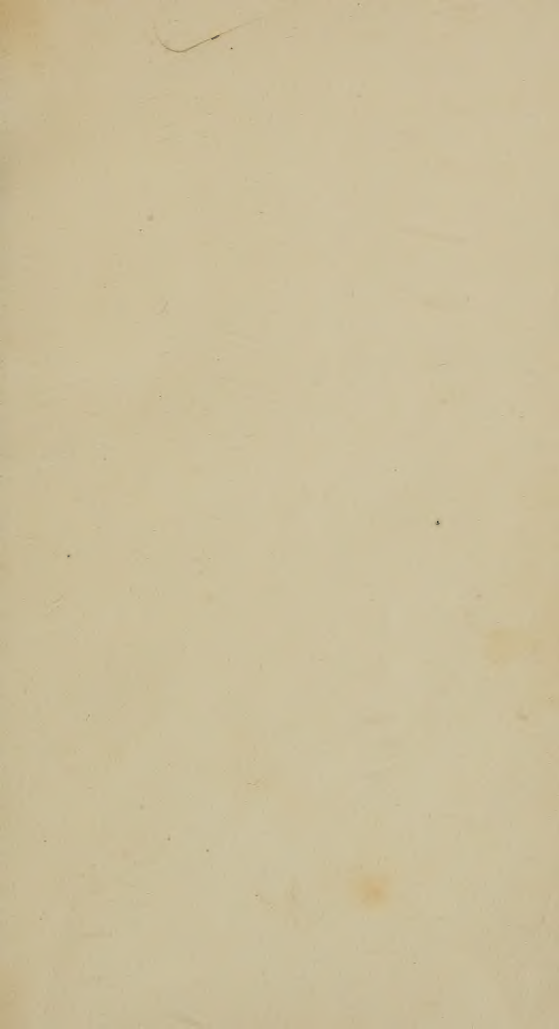
The FRIENDS of the
PUBLIC LIBRARY
of SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA, INC.

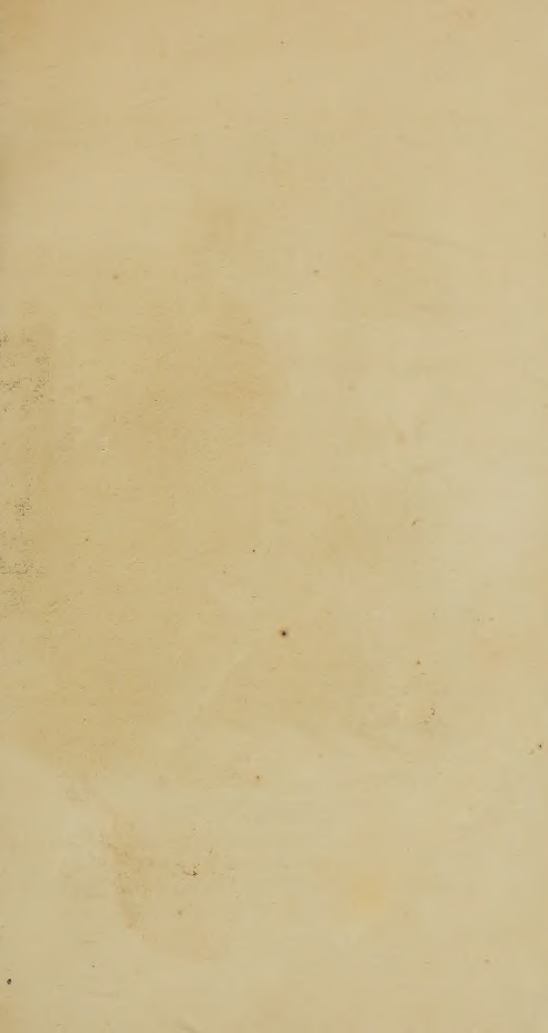
Gift
of

Mrs. E. L. Ream











“ At the same time pulling the sag ends of a rent in his trowsers over his naked limbs.”—p. 16.

LITTLE BILL AT THE PUMP.

BY A PASTOR

OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

PHILADELPHIA:

AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,

No. 146 CHESTNUT STREET.

NEW YORK, No. 147 Nassau Street.... BOSTON, No. 9 Cornhill

LOUISVILLE, No. 103 Fourth Street.

CHILDRENS ROOM
J. REFERENCE

5Z
1038
L76

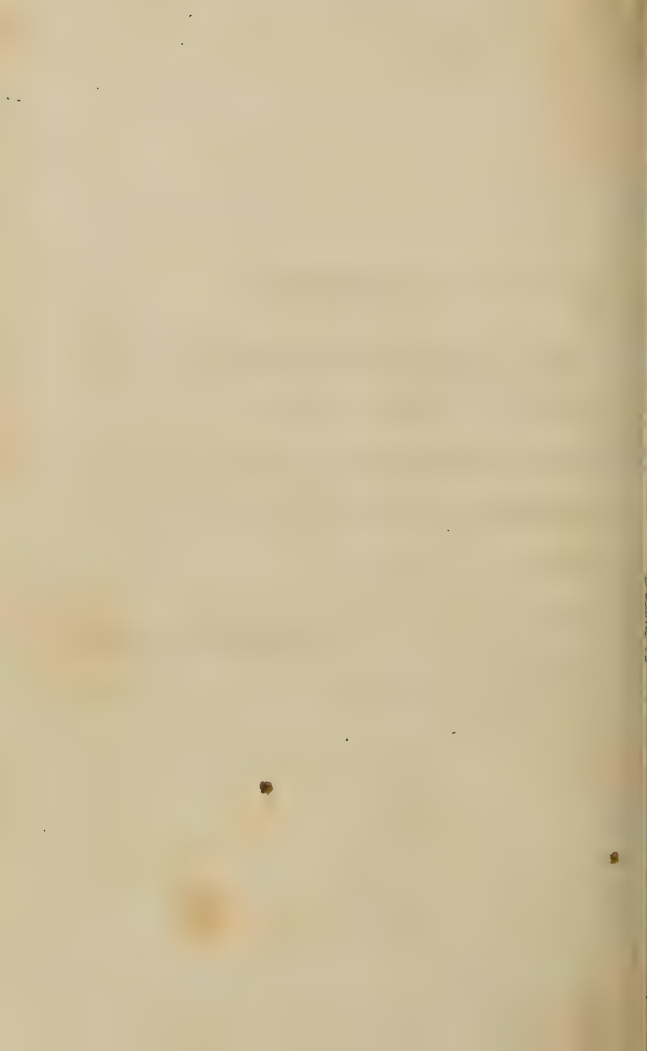
COPY 1

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1850, by the
AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Eastern District of
Pennsylvania.

~~83~~ No books are published by the AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION without the sanction of the Committee of Publication, consisting of fourteen members, from the following denominations of Christians, viz. Baptist, Methodist, Congregationalist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Reformed Dutch. Not more than three of the members can be of the same denomination, and no book can be published to which any member of the Committee shall object.

NOTE.

THIS true history of my little friend William is written out for the press, by the special request of several judicious persons to whom the facts were related; and in the hope that its publication may subserve the cause of good morals in general, and of Sunday-school interests in particular.



LITTLE BILL AT THE PUMP.

PART I.

THE pastor of —— church claimed it to be both his privilege and his duty to superintend the Sunday-school connected with his own congregation. He always, endeavoured to make it what, in his judgment, every Sunday-school should be; that is, the kind and faithful hand that should gather in from the paths of the destroyer, the outcast, the neglected and the friendless, and lead them to the fold

of God. He frequently took long walks about the town to accomplish this important duty.

On one occasion, as he was passing to the house of prayer on a Sabbath morning, he discovered, near a public pump, a group of some half-dozen boys vigorously applying themselves to a game of marbles. He approached the spot where they were, without seeming to go out of his way, and thus came quite near them before they were aware of it; and in a pleasant tone addressed them.

“Good morning, boys. Is there any thing here by which a person can get a drink of water at this pump?”

Notwithstanding the gentleness of the

salutation, they were all aroused at once, and showed no small surprise at my presence and unexpected question. Standing for a brief moment in silence, they suddenly wheeled and ran off at the top of their speed;—all, save one, who commenced a slow, backward step, desiring to get away, but to do so at the same time with a little more self-possession than his companions had exhibited.

The manner in which he eyed me while endeavouring to accomplish his retreat, and indeed his entire demeanour, pleased and interested me much, and deeply engaged my attention; and I felt impressed with the thought that a prize was before me.

He evidently wished, before leaving, to regain some marbles that, in the confusion of the flight of the other boys, had been left on the ground. I therefore gathered them up, and reaching them out to him, said—

“These, I think, fairly belong to you.”

I then held up one, in particular, between my thumb and finger, and added,

“This one must be better than the rest. It is larger, and has several colours. What do you call it?”

Advancing, for the first time, a step towards me, he replied—

“Yes, that is the best; it is the king. I call it Napoleon; it is the very best of the bunch.”

“It is certainly a fine one,” I continued.
“I like it much. When I was a boy I loved to play marbles. I had a little bag full of them.”

“What! *you* used to play marbles?”

“Yes, when I was a boy I did; and I think, too, I have seen the day when I could pretty nigh beat you.”

Drawing a step nearer to me, with a smile, a nod and a wink harmoniously combined, and a good deal of emphasis withal, he said—

“I tell you what, I can play pretty well; and you would have to throw first-rate to beat me. Why, I have won all these,” (pulling out of his pocket a handful of marbles,) “and yesterday I sold

twenty for six cents. Did *you* used to win many?"

"Oh, I never played to win."

"For what then?"

"For the fun of it."

"Well, I know there is fun in it; but I like to win. I suppose you do not play marbles now, because you are a man."

Finding myself on quite good terms with my new pupil, I thought it best to take another tack, and come a little closer to him. Said I—

"You seem to be rather a friendly little fellow, and I should like to know your name, where you live, and what you do for a living."

“My name is William; but people generally call me Bill. I live down town, and I don’t do much of any thing but play marbles.”

“I should like to see you often,” said I.

“Well, as to that, I am here about every Sunday, unless when I go sailing.”

“You must come and see me.”

“Come and see *you*!”

“Yes, why not?”

“Oh, you don’t want me to come and see you.”

“Yes, I do, and I have some beautiful picture-books, which I will show you, and tell you all about them; and I have a large yard where you can play; and if you will come and see me, I will make

you a present of something that will please you."

His countenance plainly disclosed the surprise with which he heard these things; and how really too his little mind was exercised between doubt and confidence. Rocking his body, first on one foot, then on the other, and casting a look thoughtfully around him for a moment, he calmly inquired—

"Where do *you* live?"

I informed him.

"Why, somebody told me that the minister lived there."

"So he does, and I am he."

"You the minister!"

"Yes."

“And you want me to come and see you?”

“Yes, indeed I do. Come, and then you will know if I am glad to see you.”

“Well, I must come some time.”

I then made an effort to bring him nearer still to the object I had in view from the beginning of our conversation. I inquired—“Do you know where **** church is?”

“O yes, it is in **** street.”

“There is a Sunday-school in that church, and I am going to it. Will you go with me?”

“I go with you to the Sunday-school! Oh, I cannot go now.”

And he cast a careful glance over his

person, evidently impressed with a sense of shame at his dirty and ragged condition.

“Why not go now?”

“Oh, I never went to Sunday-school in my life; and I cannot go now, anyhow.”

“Do not say you cannot. You can. Come with me. I will take care of you.”

“I am too dirty and ragged, it will not do;”—taking, at the same time, a still narrower look at his hands; and then pulling the fag-ends of a rent in his trousers over his naked limb.

“Never mind—just stop here. I will pump the water, and you can wash your hands and face, and that will do.”

“You pump water for me to wash !”

“Yes, certainly I will.”

Again he hesitated ; but finally said—

“Well, I will;” and at once laid off an old half-brimmed hat from his head, made bare his arms, and by our united labours, there were soon presented to view a clean face and a clean pair of hands for him.

I took from my pocket a white handkerchief, and shaking out its folds, presented it to him, saying—

“Take this, and wipe your face and hands with it.”

“Oh, no ! it is so white—no, not with that.”

“Yes, yes, with this ; I do so sometimes when I am out of doors and want to

wash, and can get nothing else to wipe with—it will not hurt it.”

He complied; and on returning the handkerchief, asked, with a tone and manner that could not be misunderstood,

“Do you like me?”

The question went to my very heart. I knew what feeling prompted it; I knew its import, and felt its force.

“Yes, I like you much. I hope you like me.”

“Well,—I think I do.”

“Come,” I added, “now let us go to the Sunday-school. We shall be late.”

“Do you think I had better go now?”

“By all means. I want you to hear the little girls and boys at school sing, and then you can see the books and

pictures;—and, above all, if you will go often enough, you can learn to read yourself.”

“I cannot read much, I know; but I can sing, and whistle, and play the Jew’s harp.”

I took his hand, and we passed on towards the church. On coming to the door, I said—

“This is the place. When we go in, you will see the school, and the scholars will all be glad to see you with them.”

Looking me full in the face, he said, with much earnestness—

“Oh, sir, I cannot go in—I cannot. Do let me go back, do. I am not well dressed, and I know the fellows in the room there will laugh and make fun of me.”

“They will not—they shall not—you may depend on me.”

His little chin quivered and his entire frame trembled. He stood an instant in thoughtful silence; (my own heart breathed the silent prayer to Heaven, that his courage might not fail him;) and then seizing my hand with both of his, he exclaimed—

“I will go in; you will take care of me.”

I have no power to describe fully the thrilling emotions of that moment. I then knew “I had my man;” for he confided in me—he loved me. I had won his soul,—his whole soul.

We passed in, hand in hand. The scholars too well understood my movement, not to know how to behave towards

the new-comer. There was no strange or bold gazing upon the ragged boy.

We took our seats together. After sitting a little while, I arose, and stated that now we would open the school.

Every thing that was done seemed much to interest the lad. He was supplied with cards containing lessons and pictures, while several things were explained to him. He appeared to be wrapt in wonder. Surprise and joy mingled in his looks, and he seemed to say to himself—"This is all new to me! I have never seen the like before!"

On closing the exercises of the school, he was committed to the special care of a worthy and skilful person, and at once a mutual attachment was formed between

them. This individual proposed to the boy to go home with him, and thus become more acquainted with him and his family.

“No,” said he, “not to-day. I will go home alone, and tell my mother about the minister and the school; and to-morrow I shall be glad to have you come and see us.”

A just and honest self-respect led him to desire first to see his mother, that she might make preparation to appear to the best advantage in her power before his benefactors; and further, it showed clearly, as it subsequently proved, that in that then young and untutored mind lay the germs of a true ambition, and a correct discernment of duty.

The visit was made the next day according to the request. The boy's father

and mother were both addicted to the excessive use of intoxicating liquors. The former, however, followed the seas, and was but little with his family, and that only at long intervals and for periods of short duration. He was at this time absent.

The wretched mother was deeply affected at the kindness her boy had received from strangers; and seemed scarcely able to account for it.

The Sunday after his first visit to the school, Bill appeared in his new suit, obtained for him by his good and faithful patron, to whose care he had been transferred.

No better scholar, as to behaviour, punctuality and application, was found

in that, or any other school, than this same little Bill.

His brothers and sisters, (the latter were older than himself,) influenced by his example, were induced to attend the school with him, and his mother was persuaded to attend church. Nor was this young disciple satisfied until, with the aid of his teacher, he had won over to the school and to attendance at church, several other vagrant children, among whom were nearly, if not all the boys who, at our first interview, ran away from the pump!

The pastor finally left this field of his successful labours; and for a long time had no further opportunity to know the history of Little Bill.

PART II.

IN the year 18— the same pastor had occasion to visit what was then called the “Far West.” At the close of a beautiful day in the month of July, just at dusk, as he was walking along one of the streets of a Western city of much note, with one arm thrown backward across his back, he felt the sudden and firm grasp of some other hand upon his own as it was thus placed. Turning quickly about, he found himself facing a young and well-dressed gentleman, of tall and elegant stature, and in

all respects exceedingly fair to look upon. At the same time he manifested very deep emotion, for which the pastor was utterly unable to account. Without loos-
ing his hold, the stranger said,

“You do not know me!”

“No, yet I see about your countenance something that is quite familiar to me. Have we ever met before? And, if so, when and where?”

The young man became more and more agitated, while large tears started to his eyes, and fell rapidly down his cheeks; but he uttered not a word.

“Tell me,” said I, “do tell me what this means. You distress me.

“Do you remember little Bill that you found at the pump in * * * * *, the one

you led to the Sunday-school, and used to love so well? I am he."

And throwing his arms about my neck, he wept like a babe. I need not say, that he did not weep alone.

"Ah," he continued, "that interview with you at the pump was the moment of my salvation. You, as the instrument in the hands of Divine Providence, saved me. Ever since our last separation, I have longed to see you. You have shared most sincerely in my supplications at the throne of grace. You passed the store yonder, where I was; and at the first glance I knew you, and followed you, almost without any thought of what I was doing, and seized that very hand which once, when I was a poor, outcast

boy, led me to the house of God! Your singular and unfailing kindness to me at that time has been in my thoughts by day, and often in my dreams at night. Then, I knew not the spirit that prompted your actions; but now, I trust I do. It was the spirit of compassion that flows from the gospel; the spirit of Him who went about doing good."

"I am thankful," said the pastor, "thus to meet you, and especially to find that you are so deeply and truly impressed with those good and holy things which at that time it was my earnest desire and effort to fix, lastingly, in your mind. I too can say that you have shared in my prayers to our great Creator and Redeemer, from the time of our first acquaintance

to this hour. I hope you have done and still are doing well in things temporal as well as in things spiritual."

"As to what you early taught me," he remarked, "you must have been quite successful, certainly so far as impressions and my own understanding of them are concerned; for, indeed, it seems to me that not even then, when I was but a child and so very ignorant, did you utter one word of instruction or counsel to me that I have not always clearly and definitely retained in my mind. Why, sir, I can remember them all now, even as if they had been imparted to me but yesterday.

"All that I am," he seriously added, "I owe under God to you; and not only my

self, but others of our family may express the same, for it is equally true of them."

"I should be very happy," said I, "to know something about your parents and brothers and sisters."

"About my poor father," he replied, with much emotion, "I can say but little that is definite, as he was much abroad, and finally, some years since, died from home. But I remember to have seen him when I thought he was really serious, and even affected to tears at beholding the change for the better, which he could not but discover in his family; and I am quite sure that my mother (especially after she commenced attending church) used to talk with him about his duty to God and us.

“I recollect distinctly his once saying to me, after hearing me recite my Sunday-school lesson to my oldest sister, ‘My son, I beg you never to be tired of your Sunday-school. The people there are your friends. I hope you will continue to be a good boy, and grow up to be a good and useful man.’

“This address affected me to tears; and on my father’s perceiving it, he arose, came to me, and putting his hand on my head, said,—‘God bless you, my son,’—and then passed by out of doors. I am not mistaken, I think, that he wept as he went. I cannot but indulge the hope that in his heart he garnered up the good seed, and at the hour of his death may have found pardon and favour from Heaven.

“My mother became a true penitent, and an humble follower of the Saviour, and died in great peace. I have rarely seen a death more triumphant and happy.

“My brothers and sisters, as you doubtless will recollect, were enticed to the Sunday-school, which early brought them happily and effectually under religious influence, that was not lost upon them. They have all grown up pious men and women, and maintain exemplary Christian lives.

“Our heavenly Father has favoured me with more than a mere competency of this world's goods. He has also given me an honourable place and name in his church, and blessed me with the privilege of being a Sunday-school teacher.

“And now,” continued my young friend, “you must go with me; for I must see you at my home.”

It was with sincere regret that I was compelled, owing to previous engagements which I could not set aside, to forego this pleasure.

“Well,” said he, “I have one more favour to ask of you.”

“What is that?” I inquired.

“That you would raise your hat and permit me to cut from your head a single lock of your hair. You will not deny me this?”

“No, I will not.”

Taking from his pocket a pair of merchant's scissors, he accomplished his wish.

“Now,” said I, “allow me to receive from you the same memorial.”—And there we stood under the open sky, exchanging that common memento of love and friendship,—there we stood together, for the first time after the lapse of several years, in which interval the young minister had passed to middle life, and the boy to manhood,—there we were together for the last time, until we stand, as I trust we finally shall, before “the throne of God and the Lamb,” in “glory everlasting.”

My friend is dead, and we cannot but hope that we may be yet able to give all the particulars of the event; which would supply us with another instructive and profitable little volume. He died happy, knowing in whom he had believed. In



“ There we stood under the open sky, exchanging that common memento of love and friendship.”—p 34.

CHILDRENS ROOM
J. REFERENCE

THE
JOURNAL OF
THE
AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
PUBLISHED WEEKLY
CHICAGO, ILL., U.S.A.

the cause of Christ he faithfully laboured all the days of his pious pilgrimage, and in aid of it he contributed cheerfully and liberally of his pecuniary substance according to his honest ability.

No one branch of religious duty was dearer to him, or more engaged his attention, and in none did he serve with more affection, ardour and success, than in that of the Sunday-school, for he knew its benefits and blessedness by his own happy experience.

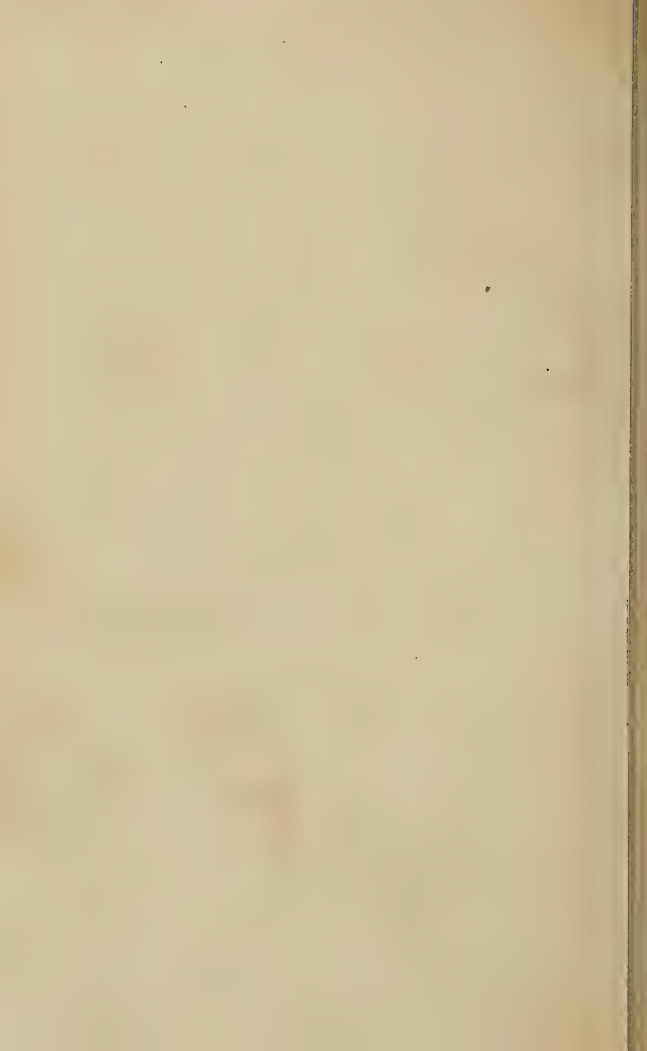
In vain should I attempt to give a full and just description of my own joyous feelings in connection with this occasion. Tongue and pen would fail me in the effort. But, thanks be to God, then and now, (and I trust it will continue so with

me until this present life shall terminate,) this entire circumstance, in all its aspects and bearings, opens to me a fountain of sweet and cheering peace. It is the peace that flows only out of the deep conviction "that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins."

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and thy truth's sake."

Reader, cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days





JAN 21 1952 R1410

CHILDREN'S ROOM
J. REFERENCE



P9-CSD-949

